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Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Preliminary report on the status of implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/279 on strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to manage and sustain peacekeeping operations

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The General Assembly, in its resolution 61/279 on strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to manage and sustain peacekeeping operations, requested the Secretary-General to submit a preliminary report on the status of the implementation of the resolution.

The present report reviews the progress made in the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, including the establishment of the Department of Field Support, and the impact of initial achievements. It also highlights other recent developments in United Nations peacekeeping and ongoing challenges in the mounting, managing and sustaining of peacekeeping operations, and their implications for the restructuring process.

Action to be taken by the General Assembly is set out in section IX of the present report.

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 61/279 on strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to manage and sustain peacekeeping operations, reaffirmed its support for further reforms within the Secretariat to improve its capacity at Headquarters to plan, deploy, manage and sustain United Nations peacekeeping operations. Central to those reforms was the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, including the establishment of a Department of Field Support.

2. In paragraph 66 of the resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit, during the second part of its resumed sixty-second session, a preliminary report on the status of the implementation of the resolution, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services to strengthen the management structures of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (A/61/743).

3. The present report outlines the preliminary progress made in the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the establishment of the Department of Field Support and addresses other requests made in resolution 61/279. It also highlights other recent developments in United Nations peacekeeping and ongoing challenges in the mounting, managing and sustaining of peacekeeping operations, and their implications for the restructuring process.

4. Pursuant to the request made in paragraph 44 of the resolution, a comprehensive report on the results of the ongoing examination and rationalization of the investigation caseload and the overall review of the capacity of the Investigations Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services was submitted to the General Assembly (A/62/582) and is before the Assembly for its consideration. Accordingly, the present report does not address issues covered in the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening investigations.

5. As requested by the Assembly in its resolution 61/279, a comprehensive report on the restructuring process and on the impact of past reforms of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in support of the implementation of mission mandates and on managing peacekeeping operations will be submitted to the General Assembly during the second part of its resumed sixty-third session.

II. Context for the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations

6. Since 2003, there has been a sustained surge in the demand for United Nations peacekeeping. With 13 operations newly established or significantly expanded since 2003, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations currently manages 20 field missions worldwide which currently comprise more than 140,000 military, police and civilian personnel. The Department of Field Support provides administrative and logistical support to an additional 16 field-based presences.

7. The exponential growth in United Nations peacekeeping has been accompanied by increased complexity in its operations. Multifarious mandates have resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of multidimensional and integrated missions and in a much broader scope of substantive responsibilities. At the same

time, the pursuit of more collective responses to threats to international peace and security and peacebuilding efforts have led to substantial growth in the number of peacekeeping partnerships, both with regional and multilateral peacekeeping forces and with humanitarian and development actors. Given the diverse range of those partnerships and the degree of partner engagement in peacekeeping-related activities, an exceptional degree of coordination and collaboration has been required. In addition, United Nations peace missions now operate more frequently in higher-threat environments, where ceasefires and peace processes are fragile and where crises are more likely to occur. New approaches to peacekeeping have therefore been necessary, requiring more extensive planning, new capabilities and increased guidance and oversight. Such higher-risk environments have also necessitated additional security measures, compounding the complexity of operations. The growing number of deployments to countries with weak or degraded infrastructure has created additional challenges in the areas of administrative and logistical support.

8. In view of those trends, and on the basis of extensive consultations with Member States, the Secretary-General submitted an initial proposal to the General Assembly indicating the intention to pursue further significant reforms in the structure and organization of the Secretariat in the area of the direction and support of peacekeeping operations (A/61/749). In its resolution 61/256, on strengthening the capacity of the Organization in peacekeeping operations, the General Assembly supported the proposal of the Secretary-General to restructure the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, including the establishment of a Department of Field Support. In response to the request by the Assembly, a more comprehensive report was submitted (A/61/858 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1 and Add.2), that elaborated on those proposals, taking into consideration the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the management structures of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (A/61/743).

9. The reform proposals combined a series of measures, including structural change to respond to the scope and magnitude of field missions; the redistribution of functions and resources across departments in alignment with the proposed rationalization of roles and responsibilities between the new Department of Field Support and the Department of Management; the creation of new capacities to reflect the increased complexity of the mandated activities of field missions; and the significant strengthening of capacities at the leadership, senior management and working levels to meet the surge in demand for peacekeeping.

III. Outcome of General Assembly deliberations on the restructuring proposal during its sixty-first session

10. In its resolution 61/279, the General Assembly approved the principal proposals to restructure the Department of Peacekeeping Operations into two Departments, with the establishment of a new Department of Field Support; create the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, integrating police, judicial, corrections, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, mine action and security sector reform structures; reconfigure the Africa Division in the Office of Operations into two divisions; establish integrated operational teams comprising political officers and military, police and support specialists within the regional

divisions of the Office of Operations; and create a Policy, Evaluation and Training Division.

11. The General Assembly also approved the creation of new capacities, including a Public Affairs Unit in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General; an integrated mission planning cell in the Office of Operations; security sector reform capacity in the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions; and evaluation and partnership capacities in the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division.

12. In addition, the General Assembly supported the strengthening of senior management. It approved the creation of the post of Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions, the upgrading of the Military Adviser position to the level of Assistant Secretary-General to head the Office of Military Affairs, and the creation of the posts of Chief of Staff, Director for Policy, Evaluation and Training, and a second Director for the Africa II Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The Assembly also approved the creation of the posts of Under-Secretary-General for Field Support and of Directors for the upgraded Field Personnel Division and Field Budget and Finance Division within the Department of Field Support. Capacity was also strengthened at the working level in most areas of both Departments.

13. With regard to the redistribution of responsibilities, the power to delegate additional authority was given to the Field Personnel Division by the Department of Management to make discretionary decisions with respect to job classifications of field positions up to and including the D-1 level, approval for the movement of staff to higher levels, and discretionary decision-making in the management of staff and the administration of benefits.

14. Certain key proposals were not supported by the General Assembly, inter alia, 17 of the 42 requests for specialist officer posts for the integrated operational teams, including one post at the principal officer level; the creation of a risk management capacity within the Department of Field Support, pending submission of the proposals by the Secretary-General regarding the application of risk management Organization-wide; the establishment of an Office of the Assistant Secretary-General for Field Administrative Support; the upgrading of the Communications and Information Technology Service to a division, headed by a Director, pending the appointment of a Chief Information Technology Officer; and the establishment of the Field Procurement Service, with increased delegation of authority for field procurement, pending the submission to and consideration by the Assembly of the report of the Secretary-General on procurement reform, pursuant to its resolution 61/246.

IV. Status of implementation of the reform process

A. Progress in restructuring

15. Since the approval of the reform proposals by the General Assembly in June 2007, the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the establishment of the Department of Field Support have been central to the United Nations peacekeeping agenda. The restructuring process has been a particular challenge, however, given the need to ensure continuity in the provision of full

support to the 20 United Nations field missions and in planning for future operations. That has included the launching of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the largest and most challenging peacekeeping operation the United Nations has undertaken to date, and the planning and subsequent deployment of another unique and highly complex operation, the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), with the support of the European Union. As experience has shown that reforms directed at longer-term institutional development cannot be deferred if the Organization is to prepare for and adapt to the dynamic evolution in United Nations peacekeeping, the restructuring effort is taking place concurrently with the continued implementation of reforms in the areas of doctrine, personnel, partnerships, organization and resources, as set out in the medium-term reform plan of both Departments, referred to as "Peace operations 2010".

16. The reform agenda for United Nations peacekeeping has been shaped by a number of key commitments. There has been an urgent need for greater focus on strategic issues related to mission planning and mandate implementation and for more effective coordination and integration in cross-cutting areas of activity, such as mission planning, deployment, management and support, as well as crisis response. In order to increase the impact of peacekeeping, mission start-up capabilities need to be strengthened in certain areas, such as policing, and greater coherence must be achieved in others, including the Organization's support for the provision of security, the rule of law and sustainable security institutions. There is also a need to more effectively harness the range of capacities that can be brought to bear in peacekeeping and post-conflict environments.

17. With regard more specifically to support issues, the reforms proposed have been guided by the commitment to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of field support, strengthen the management and oversight of peacekeeping resources, ensure the effective management of the increased delegation of authority to the field, and better leverage information and communications technology so as to address the strategic information requirements of United Nations peacekeeping. They have also been driven by the need to better identify and recruit qualified and diverse leaders for peacekeeping operations and to ensure the highest standards of conduct and discipline, as expected of United Nations peacekeepers.

18. Following the approval by the General Assembly of the resources associated with the reform proposals in June 2007, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support undertook to complete the restructuring process, comprising preparation, implementation and consolidation phases, within 12 months (see table 1). At the time of writing, the Secretariat was more than halfway through the process.

Table 1
Timetable for the implementation of the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the establishment of the Department of Field Support

	July-December 2007 Preparation	*January-June 2008 Implementation*	*June 2008 onwards Consolidation*
Recruitment	X		
Establishment of new structures and capacities in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support		X	
Establishment of integrated operational teams and other new structures		X	
Assumption of increased delegation of responsibilities from the Department of Management	X		
Development of harmonized business processes and standard operating procedures	X		
Introduction of revised business processes and information management/information technology solutions to support the new structures/integrated operational teams		X	
Training	X		
Continued training and business process enhancements			X
Evaluation of implementation			X
Space planning	X		

19. Implementation of the restructuring process has been guided by four overarching principles. The first is to give continued priority to the field missions — the raison d'être of the two Departments. The second is to ensure unity of command within United Nations peacekeeping, both in the field and at Headquarters, to promote unity of effort in pursuit of common goals. The third is to maintain a simplicity of approach, with a focus on objectives, real needs, clear communication and results. The fourth is to ensure transparency and inclusiveness, so as to facilitate decision-making and accountability as well as the engagement of all stakeholders in the process.

20. The implementation plan for the restructuring process focuses on the following priority areas, as detailed below: (a) recruitment and senior appointments; (b) the establishment of integrated and common structures, policies and processes for the activities of both Departments; (c) information management and information technology support; (d) outreach and the dissemination of information to all stakeholders on the restructuring objectives, process and implications; (e) the development and conduct of training programmes for integrated operational teams; (f) the development and implementation of evaluation mechanisms; and (g) office space and co-location.

B. Recruitment and senior appointments

21. As a core element of the restructuring process recruitment for the additional 152 positions authorized by the General Assembly has been a management priority. Within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, appointments have been made for the new post of Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions and the Chief of Staff at the Director level. In addition, the recruitment of the Military Adviser at the Assistant Secretary-General level, the two Directors of the Africa Divisions in the Office of Operations and of the Director of the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division is ongoing and should be completed by the end of March 2008. In the Department of Field Support, the Under-Secretary-General and the Directors of the Field Personnel Division and the Field Budget and Finance Division have been appointed.

22. Recruitment for all newly approved positions was carried out in accordance with established procedures and requirements. That included the classification of posts and the approval by central review bodies of all vacancy announcements prior to their posting. Vacancy announcements for civilian professional positions were circulated for the required 60 days, and the full 60-day lists were used to consider a wider pool of candidates. In the case of seconded military and police positions, the vacancy announcements were circulated to Member States for 90 days.

23. In accordance with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter, the primary consideration in the evaluation of cases was the identification of the most suitable candidates in terms of efficiency, competence and integrity, with due regard to geographic diversity. In addition, in accordance with legislative mandates, consideration was also given to ensuring proper representation of troop contributors in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, to achieve the goal of gender parity and to take account of the merits of qualified serving staff members. At present, 96 of 119 troop-contributing countries are represented in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support.

24. While the selection process for a number of posts is still ongoing, recruitment has been completed for the majority of the new positions. As at the end of February 2008, recruitment procedures had been completed for 69 positions. Recommendations for selection had been submitted to the central review bodies or the Senior Review Group of the Secretariat for another 26 positions. Recruitment is ongoing for 56 positions. In certain cases, delays have been experienced owing to the need to appoint the heads of organizational units prior to the selection of key positions in their areas. Given the number of positions involved, that recruitment exercise was time-consuming and represented a significant workload for the offices concerned, including for the Office of Human Resources Management and the central review bodies.

C. Establishment of integrated and common structures, policies and processes

25. In view of the shared goals and interlinked mandates of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, it is essential that they function in a coherent and integrated way at all levels of activity. The creation

of integrated and common structures, policies and processes for the activities of the two Departments have consequently been another core element of the restructuring effort, as outlined below.

Unity of command

26. In accordance with the commitment of the Secretary-General to guarantee unity of command in the field and at Headquarters, unity of command and further integration in the field have been strengthened through the delegation of overall authority to the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and heads of mission for all mission components, including the military, police and administration. Heads of mission support in field missions continue to exercise administrative authority delegated from the Department of Management in support of programme activities under the overall direction of the head of mission. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General will continue to report to the Secretary-General through the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. At the Headquarters level, unity of command has been achieved through arrangements by which the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support reports to and receives direction from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on all issues that relate to United Nations peacekeeping. In both cases, unity of command ensures the alignment of operational priorities and the effective coordination and integration of efforts.

Joint senior-level strategic, policy and operational forums

27. Joint senior-level forums have been established to address cross-cutting strategic, policy, operational and crisis or emergency issues. The senior management team, expanded senior management team and the Directors' meetings, held weekly, collectively provide an opportunity for information-sharing and decision-making. Weekly joint town hall meetings also contribute to organizational coherence and unity of effort.

Integrated operational teams

28. The integrated operational teams constitute the primary structure for integration between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support in the daily planning, direction, management and support of peacekeeping operations. They also serve as the principal entry point at Headquarters for Member States and troop- and police-contributing countries, as well as for United Nations and external partners. With 25 of the 42 specialist posts having been approved for the integrated operational teams, and an additional 12 specialist posts approved for the teams in support of UNAMID, the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) and MINURCAT for the 2007/08 period, six of the seven teams proposed have been created within the regional divisions of the Office of Operations. The composition of the teams is based on two models: one comprising dedicated teams of political, military, police and support specialists, as is the case with the two Africa Divisions and the Europe and Latin America Division, and the other comprising two sub-teams of political specialists, which share the police, military and support specialists, as is the case with the Asia and Middle East Division. The second model has been made possible in large part as a result of the dedicated military capacity in the Strategic Military Cell provided to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. In both cases, thematic advisers, for

example in the judicial; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; and gender areas will support or participate in the integrated operational teams when necessary.

29. Owing to the unprecedented scale, complexity and start-up demands for UNAMID, the integrated operational team for Darfur was established early, in October 2007, to ensure the effective integration of efforts during the deployment of the mission. The standing up of the remaining five integrated operational teams is expected to be completed by the end of May 2008, by which time the recruitment of military, police and support specialists is scheduled to be finalized. Terms of reference for the integrated operational teams and for the team leaders have been approved by the senior management of both Departments, with a view to clarifying their roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis the functional areas of the two Departments. In order to ensure coherence and consistency in unity of command, team leaders serve as first reporting officers, and the regional directors act as second reporting officers for the military, police and support specialists within the teams. Managers in the associated functional structures serve as additional reporting officers.

30. To facilitate the integration of efforts and efficiencies within the integrated operational teams, support in the areas of guidance, training, information management and business process improvement has been necessary. Initial emphasis has been placed on training in teambuilding, aspects of leadership in an integrated context, and further clarifying the division of labour within the teams and between the teams and the functional units. A real-time lessons-learned exercise conducted by the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division during the start-up phase of the integrated operational team for Darfur has helped to identify areas in which integrated operational teams will need critical support prior to and during their establishment. The exercise also served to identify good practices and lessons learned, which are being reflected in guidance and training materials under development. These include a handbook and a job-specific induction programme for integrated operational teams, which are being designed to ensure a common understanding of the objectives, functions and working methods of integrated operational teams; strengthen core skills in areas such as drafting, reporting, coordination, monitoring and analysis; and foster strong team dynamics. Lessons learned from the integrated operational team for Darfur are also informing the development of guidance on standard operating procedures related to core business processes and information management. The potential of the integrated operational teams has been evident in the case of the Darfur team, which has proved to be a more effective, efficient and responsive mechanism for strategic guidance and management support for UNAMID than previous arrangements.

Shared resources

31. Integration of effort, organizational coherence and efficiency are also being achieved through various shared resources. The Chief of Staff in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations is responsible for issues related to restructuring and integration. The Policy, Evaluation and Training Division is leading or coordinating policy development, common doctrine, best practices, evaluation, training and the strengthening of strategic partnerships for both departments and field missions. The Public Affairs Unit and the Situation Centre in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations are supporting both Departments in the delivery of integrated communications and responses in support of field missions. The Situation

Centre acts as an information hub for peacekeeping operations and facilitates Headquarters crisis response.

32. The Executive Office serves both Departments, facilitating the preparation and management of interlinked budgets, managing and administering integrated, shared or interlinked structures, facilitating the implementation of human resources action plans for both Departments and managing other cross-cutting issues. In addition, the Senior Leadership Appointments Section supports both Departments, as does the Conduct and Discipline Unit on matters related to the promotion of conduct and discipline standards and appropriate follow-up on conduct cases. The Office of the Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Field Support also coordinates and monitors audit-related activities for both Departments.

Policies and business processes

33. The effective and efficient functioning of integrated peacekeeping structures rests, inter alia, on the timely production and dissemination of guidance and processes aimed at supporting the integrated functions of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. Progress is being made on the development of a common doctrine and common policies and business processes for the two Departments. A core doctrinal document entitled "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines", which provides a comprehensive overview of the essential concepts and lessons learned that guide the planning and conduct of modern United Nations peacekeeping operations, was completed in January 2008 following extensive consultations, including with Member States. Progress has also been made with United Nations system partners in the integrated mission planning process through operational guidance notes, scheduled to be completed by March 2008, which translate planning policy into standard practice.

34. New or updated guidance on other issues has been developed or is under development on diverse topics ranging from joint mission analysis centres and contract management to quick-impact projects, as well as guidance for mission start-ups. In accordance with the recommendation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (see A/61/743, para. 83), the Secretary-General's bulletin on the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (ST/SGB/2000/9) is under revision and the bulletin on the Department of Field Support is being prepared to ensure that they clearly reflect the evolution and the new roles and responsibilities of the two Departments. A methodology is also currently being finalized to assist with the internal prioritization of guidance development for both Departments. Similarly, a needs assessment for business process improvement is in progress and is scheduled to be completed in March 2008. In the meantime, priority will be given to the processes identified that relate to integrated structures and those that most directly affect field missions. In accordance with the recommendation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (see A/61/743, para. 85), due attention will be given to accountability structures, internal delegations of authority and the appropriate levels of integration between entities involved in cross-cutting business processes.

D. Information management and information technology support

35. Information management and technology have played, and will continue to play, an instrumental role in the coordination, coherence and efficiency of business processes. During the preliminary phase of restructuring, information and communications policies, standard operating procedures and routing systems were revised to reflect the establishment of the Department of Field Support, including in the areas of correspondence and records management. The United Nations website and peace operations Intranet were also revised to reflect the establishment of the Department of Field Support and the additional restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Collaboration tools for the integrated operational teams have been identified and deployed to the integrated operational team for Darfur and are being progressively provided to the other integrated operational teams. To provide both Departments and field missions with access to the same peacekeeping information and research tools, a peacekeeping resource package of online databases has been deployed through the peace operations Intranet.

E. Outreach and information

36. In order to ensure the awareness of all stakeholders of the most recent reform efforts and their effective participation or support, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support have engaged in a series of outreach and public-information activities with primary stakeholders, including staff members from both Departments and from field missions, in addition to internal and external partners. Regular joint town hall meetings have been held with staff members on the restructuring process. Briefings were also provided to heads of mission in October 2007 on the reform and restructuring processes, and they were subsequently apprised of further developments and their implications for field operations. Senior leadership training and induction courses include briefings on the reform process. Information concerning the reform effort is also available on the shared Intranet and website. Outreach activities with partners including the Department of Safety and Security, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund have also been organized to explain the objectives and implications of the restructuring process and the mandates of new structures and to explore potential or increased cooperation.

F. Development and conduct of training programmes

37. In line with the goals and principles of the reform processes that are under way, the Integrated Training Service in the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division is revising its strategy. Priorities during the preliminary phase of restructuring have included leadership training to better prepare mission leadership and senior management for their assignments. That has involved the further development of standardized training materials and the conduct of training courses for mission leadership and senior management through the senior mission leaders course and the senior leadership induction programme, which have been provided to 72 and 29 mission leaders and members of senior management, respectively, during the past

year. In addition to leadership training, a computer-based senior mission administration and resources training programme is currently being developed; the first pilot course was held in February 2008. Since early 2007, new civilian peacekeeping personnel have undergone mandatory civilian pre-deployment induction training at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy. In addition to delivering and developing training courses, the Integrated Training Service is undertaking a comprehensive needs assessment of field and Headquarters training needs, which will inform the implementation of the peacekeeping training strategy during the period from 2008 to 2010.

G. Development and implementation of evaluation mechanisms

38. While the newly established evaluation capacity is still in the nascent stage, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support are jointly developing an evaluation mechanism with key performance indicators. The supporting system, which is expected to be operational by June 2008, will allow United Nations Headquarters to have real-time access to information and indicators on a broad range of operational activities. In addition, three evaluations are scheduled for completion by 30 June 2008. Furthermore, a draft mission evaluation policy has been developed, and other guidance material for evaluations is under revision.

H. Accommodation and co-location of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support

39. In the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to manage and sustain peace operations (A/61/858 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1 and Add.2) the dispersion of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations as a result of its expansion over the past 10 years was highlighted, as was the resulting considerable impediment to the coordination and integration of the daily activities of the Department in supporting field missions. To facilitate integration efforts, office space has been reassigned internally within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. The co-location of senior management was completed in 2007, and high priority is now being accorded to the co-location of integrated operational teams, which should be completed by March 2008. However, in many cases, co-location is being achieved through the doubling up of Professional staff in existing offices or by their placement at workstations. New staff members are being accommodated in additional rented office space.

40. While these solutions have addressed immediate space needs, they have resulted in the further geographical dispersion of the Departments. The situation has been exacerbated by the requirement to accommodate planning and mission start-up support teams in support of the implementation of Security Council mandates for Darfur as well as Chad and the Central African Republic. Consultations within the Secretariat are ongoing with a view to identifying long-term solutions to the space requirements of both Departments within the constraints of the capital master plan. Additional resources may be required to adapt facilities to the requirements of both Departments.

V. Progress in the establishment of newly created structures

41. While the implementation phase of the restructuring process was scheduled to begin on 1 January 2008 following the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the establishment of the Department of Field Support and approval for the creation of the new capacities, both Departments have been committed to the achievement of early results. That has been accomplished through the reorientation of existing capacities, the temporary reallocation of resources and the prioritization of recruitment processes.

A. Office of the Under-Secretary-General, Department of Peacekeeping Operations

42. The Chief of Staff position, which was established with the primary responsibility of overseeing the internal management of the Department on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General, was filled in October 2007. A considerable part of that responsibility is to ensure the effective integration of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support at all levels of activity, as well as leading and overseeing the development and implementation of the Department's reform and change management plans. The Chief of Staff directs the overall implementation of the restructuring process, in collaboration with the Director of the Department of Field Support. The Chief of Staff has given priority attention to the recruitment of candidates for senior posts, all of which are expected to be filled during the first quarter of 2008; the establishment and effective functioning of the integrated operational teams; and the revision of policies, procedures and work processes.

43. As part of the Chief of Staff's broader responsibilities, a programme management plan is under development to ensure the effective monitoring and prioritized delivery of departmental commitments, including results-based budget frameworks. The plan, which takes into consideration the recommendation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (see A/61/743, para. 101) regarding the need to strengthen the monitoring of the work of the Department, is due to be finalized in March 2008. Following the creation of an information management capacity on 1 January 2008, the Chief of Staff has been able to assume broader information management responsibilities, including the reconvening of the Information Management Committee in February 2008, with a composition revised to reflect the principal units of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. In addition, an implementation plan for the joint information management strategy for the Departments has been developed which will ensure the effective coordination and coherence of activities in this area, including the development and prioritization of related budget proposals.

B. Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions

44. The Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions was established in July 2007, and the Assistant Secretary-General of the Office assumed his functions in September 2007. With the consolidation of existing police, justice, corrections, mine action, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration structures, and the

establishment of new security sector reform capacity, the Office has been actively implementing its mandate to provide a comprehensive and integrated approach to the provision of United Nations assistance in the area of security and the rule of law. Owing to the special nature of police functions in United Nations peacekeeping operations, the Police Adviser continues to be a member of the senior management team and has direct access to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, as required. While the Office provides support primarily to United Nations peacekeeping operations, it has broader responsibilities within the United Nations system in certain areas, such as police, corrections, mine action and security sector reform.

45. In the context of support for United Nations peacekeeping operations, a priority task has been the provision of strategic advice and guidance to the integrated operational teams and to counterparts of the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions in missions. In that regard, measures have been taken to ensure closer and more systematic collaboration, including in the preparation of mandate reviews by the Security Council and the preparation of budget proposals and reports of the Secretary-General, to ensure that the political, financial and material requirements of missions in supporting those activities are clearly set out, so as to enable Member States to take informed decisions.

46. Other priority initiatives include the development of a strategy for the Office that integrates approaches and activities across the criminal justice spectrum and develops synergies among disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, security sector reform and mine action components; the development of a holistic and coherent approach to security sector reform within the United Nations system, in collaboration with United Nations partners, as presented in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Securing peace and development: the role of United Nations in supporting security sector reform" (A/62/659-S/2008/39); the enhancement of working relationships with field operations through the establishment of regular reporting procedures; the conduct of a preliminary inventory of all projects relating to the rule of law and security planned and implemented by the United Nations and its partners, with a view to strengthening strategic planning and better addressing critical gaps at the programmatic level; and the institution of mission planning meetings within the Office to ensure the synchronization of strategies and plans. That has led to the provision of integrated strategic guidance and support to field missions, in addition to joint mission assessments and evaluations.

C. Policy, Evaluation and Training Division

47. The Policy, Evaluation and Training Division was established in July 2007 with the consolidation of the existing Peacekeeping Best Practices Section and the Integrated Training Service and the establishment of new capacities for evaluation and partnerships. It provides an integrated capacity for the development and dissemination of doctrine for United Nations peacekeeping operations, which is informed by the systematic capturing of best practices and lessons learned, the development and provision of training based on doctrine and the evaluation of mission performance in implementing mandates, and the management of strategic peacekeeping partnerships.

48. In addition to the activities previously highlighted in paragraph 37 above, the recently established evaluation capacity will revise or develop guidance policies, procedures and tools for the conduct of self-evaluation to support the identification of areas for improvement, such as mandate implementation, operational activities or business processes, policies, management, training, performance and structures, and of areas in which cross-cutting remedial action needs to be taken. Evaluations of mission performance and of cross-cutting functions across missions will also be undertaken.

D. Partnerships

49. The partnerships capacity was created in November 2007. Building on the work undertaken by the Peace operations 2010 reform task force in reviewing key internal peacekeeping partnerships, it is developing a two-year strategic plan that focuses on priority partnerships with (a) regional organizations, in particular the European Union, the African Union and African subregional organizations, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; (b) United Nations and external development partners, particularly the United Nations Development Programme, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the World Bank; and (c) humanitarian and human rights partners, especially the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

50. With regard to regional organizations, attention will be given to building on the cooperation frameworks already in place with the African Union and the European Union through the elaboration of tools that are essential to implementing United Nations cooperation commitments. Such tools will include detailed arrangements for operational cooperation in mission-specific as well as functional areas, effective liaison arrangements for joint assessment and programmatic and evaluation activities, as well as joint support frameworks in logistics, and, where appropriate, procurement. Partnerships with humanitarian and development actors will focus on the development of strategic frameworks that set out institutional arrangements, including identified areas of common interest, roles and responsibilities, and modalities for regular communication, building on existing coordination processes, in particular the integrated mission planning process and system-wide coordination mechanisms such as the Executive Committee on Peace and Security and the Rule of Law Resource and Coordination Group. Progress is already under way on the negotiation of a strategic framework agreement on United Nations-World Bank cooperation in a crisis context, which will serve as the basis for the implementation of more comprehensive joint operational initiatives, building on those initiated in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and Liberia.

E. Office of the Under-Secretary-General, Department of Field Support

51. The Office of the Under-Secretary-General was established with the responsibility of ensuring the strategic direction, management and coordination of all support provided to United Nations field operations. In that context, the Office of the Under-Secretary-General and the senior leadership of the Department have been actively vested in improving dialogue and increasing interaction with Member

States and troop- and police-contributing countries to increase awareness of support functions as strategic enablers for the successful mounting and sustainment of United Nations field operations.

52. The Officer-in-Charge of the Department provides regular briefings to the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General and attends Management Committee meetings, which has resulted in a greater awareness in the decision-making process of mission support needs. The Officer-in-Charge is also working closely with the Department of Management and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General to coordinate priority management issues with implications for field operations, such as human resources management and procurement reform, and the strengthening of the role of information and communications technology in supporting field missions.

53. As highlighted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (see A/61/743, para. 99), it has become imperative to establish an enterprise risk management mechanism as a management tool to mitigate risks in achieving the Department's objectives in managing complex, integrated peacekeeping missions operating in increasingly difficult environments. While the General Assembly did not approve resources for the risk management capacity proposed, resources were redeployed temporarily from other areas to enable the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support to develop a draft operational risk management strategy and draft policy, which will be aligned with the ongoing Secretariat-wide enterprise risk management framework initiative. In the meantime, in response to demand, a pilot risk assessment for the start-up of UNAMID was conducted, the results of which will be used to calibrate risk management approaches by the two Departments.

54. The relocation of the Senior Leadership Appointments Section to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General from the former Personnel Management Support Service has effectively elevated the profile of the Section and ensured a more consistent alignment with political and operational priorities. That relatively new capacity has improved internal planning, monitoring and support for senior management, and progress is being made towards enhancing processes and procedures for decision-making regarding senior leadership appointments in field missions. The Section has established an active roster of candidates for mission leadership posts and provided renewed levels of support to mission managers and individual candidates alike. The dedicated attention paid to organizational objectives such as improving gender balance is positively reflected in the current number of women performing key leadership functions in field operations, which has increased by more than 45 per cent during the past year.

VI. Role of the Deputy Secretary-General

55. In its resolution 61/279, the General Assembly requested that the role and duties of the Deputy Secretary-General be explicitly defined in this reform, including in relation to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Management. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/12 B, the Deputy Secretary-General assists the Secretary-General in overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Secretariat. The role of the Deputy Secretary-General focuses on

strategic management and cross-cutting management policy, ensuring the coordination of key management matters. The Deputy Secretary-General is the Chair of the Management Committee, which is the primary mechanism for ensuring the effective coordination, consideration and approval of internal reform and cross-cutting management matters. As the Management Committee includes the Under-Secretaries-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Political Affairs, Field Support and Management in its membership, the Deputy Secretary-General utilizes it to coordinate and provide guidance on peacekeeping-related management issues.

VII. Related reform initiatives

A. Peace operations 2010

56. The measures set out in the most recent reform agenda are critical to improving the responsiveness, effectiveness and accountability of the United Nations. However, they constitute only part of the response to the current and anticipated challenges in the mounting and sustaining of peacekeeping operations. Through the internal five-year reform programme of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, Peace operations 2010, the Departments are addressing complementary areas that also require priority attention if United Nations peacekeeping is to continue with the process of learning and adapting to evolving challenges, strengthening its expertise and maintaining clarity of purpose. As indicated earlier, these include the areas of doctrine, personnel, partnerships, organization and resources. The progress made in the implementation of the reform programme is outlined in reports to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/61/668 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1 and A/62/627 and Add.1) and the overview report on the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/62/727). With the additional resources approved for the 2007/08 period as part of the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, further progress has been achieved — and in some cases accelerated — in the implementation of the reform programme.

B. Human resources management

57. The ability to recruit and retain high-quality civilian personnel to work and live in conditions of hardship and insecurity is key to the success of new and existing field missions. Through the restructuring of the Field Personnel Division and with additional human resources management delegations of authority from the Department of Management, the Division has streamlined its structure and focused on supporting the daily operational management of human resources, and on foundational policy, recruitment outreach, career development and quality assurance.

58. The Field Personnel Operations Service, which reflects the regional integrated operational team structure in the Office of Operations to facilitate linkages, is responsible for staffing, travel and administrative support, while the Field Personnel Specialist Support Service is dedicated to the delivery of foundational human resources management support to field missions and integrated operational teams. Key areas of support include the planning and design of mission structures in a

manner that will allow the most effective implementation of mandates and the development of rosters of highly qualified staff members reflecting the broadest possible geographical distribution. In addition, a comprehensive career-development and staff-rotation strategy is being developed to ensure that staff are systematically appraised of, and assisted in obtaining, the professional qualifications and experience required to meet evolving operational demands. The Quality Assurance and Information Management Section conducts quality assurance reviews of the performance of human resources management functions both at Headquarters and in the field and is responsible for developing a cadre of human resources management officers, addressing staff appeals and audits, and incorporating best practices and lessons learned into human resources management policies and procedures applied to field missions. Outreach to peacekeeping partners within the United Nations system, as well as civilian recruitment agencies and Member States, are also being strengthened to address the high vacancy rates in United Nations field missions, ensure gender balance and secure as broad a geographical representation as possible, as well as an appropriate representation of troop- and police-contributing countries, as feasible.

59. The restructuring has already yielded efficiency and productivity gains, including an increase in the deployment of staff members by more than 50 per cent and a reduction in overall vacancy rates. The overall vacancy rate in peacekeeping operations reached 17 per cent as at 31 December 2007, representing a decrease from a 20 per cent vacancy rate the previous year, despite an overall increase of 3,343 positions to be filled. The introduction of occupational group managers with expertise and experience in the areas in which recruitment is under way will make possible more targeted outreach and recruitment efforts to be made while offering serving staff more effective career advice. The implementation of human resources action plans in the field and their planned roll-out to all field missions in July 2008 will enhance human resources planning and self-monitoring, delineate roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for human resources management in the field, and identify areas where field missions require strengthened support from Headquarters. The human resources action plan framework for field missions addresses strategically important management areas and incorporates the responsibility and accountability of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General/head of mission in terms of meeting pre-agreed goals and targets in each management area. Additionally, backlog in the processing of staff selections regarding movements to a higher level are being cleared under the enhanced delegation of authority given to the Department of Field Support. Further progress is anticipated as staff selected to fill the new positions approved as part of the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the establishment of the Department of Field Support assume their functions.

C. Procurement

60. Recognizing the complex and unique circumstances associated with procurement for United Nations peacekeeping operations, the Secretary-General, in his reform agenda aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Organization to manage and sustain peace operations (A/61/749 and A/61/858 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1 and Add.2), proposed the realignment of field procurement functions from the Department of Management to the Department of Field Support.

The General Assembly, in its resolution 61/279, decided to revert to the procurement proposals following the submission of the report of the Secretary-General requested in its resolution 61/246.

61. In accordance with that resolution and recognizing that procurement is one of the most important enabling functions for peacekeeping missions, in particular for their start-up, continued discussions are under way between the Department of Field Support and the Department of Management on ways to ensure timely and effective procurement support to the field, including through the closer involvement of procurement staff in the planning process, programme delivery and contract oversight, as well as further action to better align responsibility, accountability and authority for field procurement. The report of the Secretary-General on procurement governance will be submitted for the consideration of the General Assembly at the second part of its resumed sixty-second session.

D. Communications and information technology

62. The Communications and Information Technology Service of the Department of Field Support plays an instrumental role in facilitating unity of command and mission management and the safety and security of personnel through the provision of 24-hour, 7-day, reliable, secure voice and data communications to field missions, including to military and police components. It has also assumed a leading role, together with the Chief Information Technology Officer and the Information Technology Services Division within the Department of Management, in the development and launching of a number of Secretariat enterprise management and administrative systems for all core areas of its business, including finance, human resources and logistics, such as enterprise resource planning, enterprise content management and international public sector accounting systems.

63. In an effort to optimize information and communications technology capacity to more effectively and efficiently address the strategic information needs of the Organization in achieving its mandates, the position of Chief Information Technology Officer at the Assistant Secretary-General level was established in July 2006, with responsibility for developing for the Organization an overall strategic vision in the areas of information and communications technology and knowledge management; coordinating the implementation of major information and communications technology initiatives; promulgating policies on information technology matters; coordinating, through appropriate delegation, information and communications technology operations within the Secretariat; and ensuring the application of uniform information and communications technology standards across the Organization. The mandate of the Chief Information Technology Officer will reinforce the ability of the Department of Field Support to deliver dedicated support to field operations through enhanced coordination within the Secretariat, as well as the systematic, structured review and identification of additional policy requirements and compliance mechanisms.

E. Office of Military Affairs

64. In its resolution 61/279, the General Assembly requested a comprehensive analysis of the Office of Military Affairs of the Department of Peacekeeping

Operations, taking into consideration the findings of the report on the Strategic Military Cell and the lessons learned from the first period of the expansion of the Office of Military Affairs, to enable the General Assembly to review and further strengthen the functions of the Office.

65. Following a comprehensive review of the Office of Military Affairs, the Secretary-General will submit to the General Assembly a proposal aimed at considerably reinforcing the capacity of the military component, particularly as it affects the strategic direction, oversight and specialist advice and support provided to peacekeeping operations, with a view to increasing the effectiveness of United Nations field operations and enhancing the protection of peacekeeping personnel. As part of the restructuring process, specific proposals will be made to incorporate the strongest features of the Strategic Military Cell into the Office of Military Affairs for the benefit of all peacekeeping operations. To ensure unity of effort and the rationalization of resources, a proposal to reduce the size of the Strategic Military Cell and incorporate it into the Office of Military Affairs as a separate but integral crisis cell will also be made, with a view to maintaining its core capacities until they have been incorporated into the structure of the Office of Military Affairs. A comprehensive analysis of the Office of Military Affairs will be presented to the General Assembly in a separate report (A/62/752), including related requirements and associated financial resources, to be considered by the Assembly during the second part of its resumed sixty-second session.

VIII. Evolution of the support account

66. In paragraph 32 of its resolution 61/279, the General Assembly recalled paragraph 13 of its resolution 60/268 and reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to submit to it the findings of a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of the support account.

67. Pursuant to a request contained in paragraph 13 of General Assembly resolution 60/268, a preliminary external study of the evolution of the support account was undertaken. The study was aimed at examining the backstopping requirements for peacekeeping operations vis-à-vis the growth in the number of such operations and their complexity in order to attempt to establish clear linkages between the two and to propose a budget model that would allow adequate backstopping support for the missions while maintaining flexibility in the determination of support account staffing requirements.

68. The Secretariat, having thoroughly reviewed the findings and recommendations contained in the preliminary study, noted that they were primarily of a theoretical nature and did not propose any new approach to the determination of support account staffing requirements.

69. Furthermore, following the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the establishment of the Department of Field Support, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 61/279, it is necessary to take a fresh look at the overall issue in the light of the structural and functional changes within the two Departments, which are expected to be completed by 30 June 2008.

70. Accordingly, it is expected that a report on the findings of a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of the support account for peacekeeping operations will be submitted for consideration by the General Assembly at its sixty-third session.

IX. Initial impact of restructuring

71. Although the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support are in the early stages of implementation in the restructuring process, the impact of initial efforts is already evident in certain areas. The separation of the Office of Mission Support from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the creation of the Department of Field Support has raised the level of engagement with Member States on support issues, resulting in an increased awareness and appreciation by Member States of the undertaking and of the enterprise required to mount and support peacekeeping operations.

72. The establishment of integrated structures in closely related areas of activity is enabling the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to adopt more holistic and coherent approaches to its work. The creation of new capacities is enabling the Department to begin institutionalizing or building on established expertise in areas where the Organization is being requested to assist national capacities during periods of stabilization in order to take advantage of political momentum to build a sustainable peace. New capacities such as partnerships are also beginning to strengthen the ability of United Nations peacekeeping operations to engage in ongoing institutional development.

73. The restructuring process has given new impetus to the strengthening of the coordination and integration of programmatic and support activities, which is beginning to lead to the more effective and efficient management of and support to missions in cross-cutting areas of activity. In addition, the increased delegation of authority given to the Department of Field Support in human resources management is helping to streamline review and decision-making processes, which is allowing the delivery of more efficient and responsive services to missions.

X. Challenges

74. Since the reform proposals were made, in April 2007, the demand for United Nations peacekeeping has continued unabated. Following Security Council resolutions 1769 (2007) and 1778 (2007), concerning Darfur and concerning Chad and the Central African Republic, respectively, the United Nations has had to plan and launch two unique and highly complex operations; the former constitutes the largest, most complex and challenging peacekeeping operation the Organization has undertaken to date. These missions have resulted in an authorized increase of up to approximately 20,000 military personnel and 7,000 police, which, when combined with the civilian personnel for these missions, constitutes an overall increase in United Nations field personnel of more than 30 per cent.

75. UNAMID and MINURCAT represent significant departures from previous cooperation models between United Nations peacekeeping operations and regional organizations. As operations with interlinked mandates, they obligate partnerships to evolve to a new level of effort and detail in all areas of activity, including planning,

force generation, deployment, support and monitoring, to ensure the coherence and mutual reinforcement of efforts. In addition to cooperation in the operational context, a significant investment has been made in connection with long-term peacekeeping capacity-building in Africa. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is working with the African Union Commission, the regional economic communities and international partners to develop a coherent approach to providing support to the establishment and strengthening of the African Peace and Security Architecture, in furtherance of the objectives of the World Summit Outcome and the 10-year capacity-building plan of 2005. As the process develops, new demands arise, particularly concerning the need for enhanced coordination and visibility and it will be increasingly important to maintain a sustained approach if African Union capacity is to evolve effectively.

76. The sustained surge in demand for United Nations peacekeeping and the growing complexity of peacekeeping environments have tested the ability of the United Nations to meet such unrelenting challenges. At the same time, these circumstances have tested the will of the international community to provide the personnel, finances and logistical and political support required to successfully implement the mandates given to the Secretariat by the Security Council. The provision of resources is not only a matter of quantity; it is also a matter of quality, required for specialized functions to be undertaken or for tasks to be performed that require specialized capabilities. Nowhere has this been more evident than in the area of policing, which is increasingly required to implement complex reform, restructuring and rebuilding mandates — its authorized strength in peacekeeping operations has increased by more than 65 per cent during the past seven months; and in Darfur, where the Organization faces a considerable risk of failure without the support urgently required from Member States.

77. Undertaking an intensive reform of peacekeeping while launching the most challenging mission in the history of United Nations peacekeeping has also served to reinforce some of the challenges the Organization faces. Most notable has been the challenge of carrying out detailed planning before the launch of complex operations without prejudging the political decisions to be made by Member States. This not only entails significant financial costs owing to the need for accelerated deployment but can also have a considerable political cost in terms of momentum lost after the signing of a peace agreement or ceasefire. Working within the Organization's rules and regulations, which are not designed to meet the particular needs and realities of peacekeeping operations, has been another major challenge. The Secretariat will be required to formulate proposals for the approval of Member States in order to make further progress in this regard, including the enhancement of rapid-deployment capabilities.

78. The conditions of service offered to staff serving in United Nations field operations pose critical obstacles to the recruitment of highly qualified civilian personnel, as demonstrated by the high vacancy and turnover rates. Building on the lessons learned by and the experience of field-based organizations within the United Nations system, the Secretary-General submitted for the approval of the General Assembly a comprehensive package of human resources management reforms in the report entitled "Investing in people" (A/61/255 and Add. 1 and Add.1/Corr.1) and in other reports, including on the streamlining of contractual arrangements for all categories of staff (A/62/274), the harmonization of conditions of service of staff serving in United Nations field operations with those offered by other organizations

within the United Nations system (A/61/861), and the establishment of a cadre of 2,500 career staff to meet the current and anticipated medium-term baseline staffing requirements for peacekeeping operations and special political missions (A/61/850).

79. The International Civil Service Commission supported the proposals of the Secretary-General to streamline contractual arrangements, harmonized conditions of service for staff in the field and the creation of a career cadre of 2,500 civilian peacekeepers. In its report on human resources management (A/62/7/Add.14), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions recommended approval of the proposal to harmonize the designation of missions on the basis of the security phase and the replacement of the occasional recuperation break with rest and recuperation travel. It also recommended that consideration of the introduction of the special operations approach be deferred. It did not recommend the establishment of the proposed cadre of 2,500 civilian peacekeepers, given its view that the streamlining of contractual arrangements and the harmonization of conditions of service would address many of the concerns that had given rise to the proposal to establish the peacekeeping cadre. The human resources reform proposals of the Secretary-General are before the General Assembly for its consideration during its resumed sixty-second session.

80. The institutionalization of risk management has been another significant challenge given the multiple priorities that the Departments are managing simultaneously in response to operational demands. As the Secretariat deliberates on its risk management approach, it will be essential to ensure that the core requirements of financial risk management are carefully weighed against the need for flexibility so as to manage operational risk in field operations.

81. The demands made on United Nations peacekeeping have continued to grow during the past six months in ways that could not have been fully planned for when additional resources were approved for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008. The Departments are seeking ways to optimize their current resources, particularly in connection with supporting the newly established missions in Darfur and in Chad and the Central African Republic. However, there is still a requirement to ensure the appropriate level of dedicated support for those missions. At the same time, this period has served to validate the resource requests made in the support account budget for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 (A/61/858/Add.1 and Corr.1), as they relate to strengthening leadership within the Department of Field Support and to risk management, strategic planning, public affairs and procurement.

XI. Conclusions

82. The core business of United Nations peacekeeping has evolved significantly during the past decade, as has the context in which field missions operate. Through a series of reforms under way since 2000, the Secretariat has been able to strengthen its capacity to plan, deploy, direct, support and transition out of peacekeeping operations. Those improvements have contributed in part to the exponential demand in recent years for United Nations peacekeeping as an instrument for maintaining international peace and security. Given the growth, dynamism and increasing complexity of United Nations peacekeeping and the environment in which it

operates, further reforms of the Secretariat will undoubtedly be required. These will need to be undertaken in concert with ongoing efforts for institutional development, as the ability of United Nations peacekeeping to evolve at the same pace will be increasingly important to its success.

XII. Action to be taken by the General Assembly

83. **The General Assembly is requested to take note of the report.**